

Senator Ernest Hollings
Senator Evan Bayh
Senator Richard Lugar
Representative Chris Chocola
FCC Chairman Michael K. Powell
FCC Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy
FCC Commissioner Michael J. Copps
FCC Commissioner Kevin J. Martin
FCC Commissioner Jonathan S. Adelstein

From: seagrey@voicenet.com
To: Kathleen Abernathy
Date: Thu, Jun 12, 2003 4:58 AM
Subject: Please Act to Stop Media Monopolies

Senator John McCain
U.S. Senate
241 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator McCain,

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Please tell the FCC to reinstate its traditional media ownership rules for the sake of competition and democracy.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Carol Herrmann
9 Rosewood Ter
East Rutherford, New Jersey 07073

cc:

Senator Ernest Hollings
Representative Steven Rothman
Senator Jon Corzine
Senator Frank Lautenberg
FCC Chairman Michael K. Powell
FCC Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy
FCC Commissioner Michael J. Copps
FCC Commissioner Kevin J. Martin
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From: rjohwoodrj@aol.com
To: Commissioner Adelstein
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Senator Peter Fitzgerald
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2017 cardinal lane
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From: spencer@eurekanet.com
To: Commissioner Adelstein
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Terry Spencer
P.O. box 24
2558 second street
Syracuse, Ohio 45779-0024

cc:

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Senator Ernest Hollings

Senator George Voinovich

Representative Ted Strickland

FCC Chairman Michael K. Powell

FCC Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy

FCC Commissioner Michael J. Copps

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FCC Commissioner Jonathan S. Adelstein

From: Rich12332@cs.com
To: Commissioner Adelstein, KM KJMWEB, Michael Copps, Kathleen Abernathy
Date: Thu, Jun 12, 2003 5:03 AM
Subject: FCC decided auction off America's access to diverse viewpoints

http://www.slweekly.com/editorial/2003/mdia_2003-06-12.cfm

With network anchors appearing on camera all but draped in American flags, and with cable channels employing bigots as pseudo-journalists, it's hard not to hate the media these days. It doesn't help, either, that the Federal Communication Commission decided earlier this month to auction off America's access to diverse viewpoints to corporations who peddle journalism like they do light bulbs and computer software. The ever-advancing sludge of infotainment, quest for corporate profits and echo of once-independent voices melding into an all-encompassing drone is enough to turn anybody off from newspapers and the nightly news. Or to label the mainstream media "an abomination," as does Giles Larsen.

"From our standpoint as activists, the media completely distorts the level of opposition to major issues, like the war, like corporate globalization. Any notion of balance doesn't exist," he says. "We exist to expose the realities of public sentiment. The mainstream media makes people feel so marginalized, and we exist to let people know there are popular movements out there."

"We" is the Utah Independent Media Center, part of a worldwide media network started by anti-globalization activists frustrated by how the mainstream media portrayed the 1999 World Trade Organization protests held in Seattle. Since then, the indy media network has mushroomed into 97 centers, each with its own Website, including one in Utah. Its motto: "Don't hate the media, be the media." The slogan is slapped on the walls of the Salt Lake City home Larsen shares with three roommates. Another decoration is a poster of civilians hailing Nazi stormtroopers, with the names of corporate media outlets-including The Salt Lake Tribune and the Deseret News-scratched onto the outstretched arms. So much for subtlety.

That same lack of subtlety is what makes Utah IMC such a valuable commodity, especially at a time when wars are parsed to cheerleading reports from the desert and regulatory agencies kowtow to industry wishes. Utah IMC certainly didn't mince words in the lead up to the war in Iraq-when writers routinely questioned the Bush administration's contention that Saddam Hussein possessed weapons of mass destruction-or during it, when gruesome photographs of dead Iraqi civilians were posted on its site, www.utah.indymedia.org. On a local level, the site has been a hotbed of debate about the future of the Utah Green Party, a story that local newspapers, including this one, have covered but not with the same level of depth, knowledge or commentary.

True to its post-modern, activist roots, the center is really not a center, at least not in any physical sense. Utah IMC is really just a Website that is part news source and part free-speech forum, where people, regardless of political view, are encouraged to post their own articles and opinions. Editing doesn't exist, outside of fixing grammar, nuking spam and spiking stories that aren't newsworthy, like a recent posting featuring nothing but a photo of an unidentified woman.

Self-published articles run the gamut-last week, the site featured stories about the local belly-dancing controversy, the suffering of the Kurds, the horrors of Palestinian terrorism and how Sen. John McCain can stop the FCC. Center volunteers collaborate on center-page, left-leaning features, including the most recent piece about the G8 protests in Evian, France.

Other than that, it's media for the people, by the people. "It's not so important that there's this core group of IMC volunteers because the site constantly updates itself by people publishing their own news," Larsen says, although he adds the group is in constant need of volunteers.

Of course, some of the news on Utah IMC is nutty, crackpot-conspiracy stuff from both the right and the left. Jonathan Jemming, who helped start the Utah IMC in the fall of 2000, says it pains him to see some of the shit posted on the site: "Sometimes I look at the site, and I think, 'Oh my God, what am I looking at now?'"

Larsen has had similar reactions, but says that's the nature of the medium. Besides, he says, it would be hypocritical to censor anybody on a site striving to give a voice to people silenced by the mainstream media.

Ironically, sites like the Utah IMC gave the FCC an excuse to relax long-standing rules regulating media ownership-like cross ownership of newspapers and broadcast outlets, and owning more than one TV station in a particular market. Citing the proliferation of the Internet, FCC Chairman Michael Powell